

REMARKS

The Applicants hereby submit the present *Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116(b) (Second)* for the above-referenced patent application, entry of which is earnestly solicited. This Amendment is submitted after the receipt of the Advisory Action of 6 January 2006, which responded to the Applicant's submission of the Amendment Under 37 C.F.R § 1.116(b) of 9 December 2005.

In this Amendment, the Applicants amend claims 1 and 9, cancel claims 3-4, 6, 11-12, and 14, and add new claims 31-40. The Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been entered from the amendment of claims and addition of new claims.

In the Office Action mailed on 21 March 2005, the Examiner indicated that claims 17-22 and 24-30 were allowed. The Applicants respectfully acknowledge such allowability over the prior art of record.

In addition, the Examiner indicated that claims 2, 4, 5, 10, 12, and 13 were directed to allowable subject matter, and merely objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The Applicants respectfully acknowledge the Examiner's conditional allowability of these claims.

In response, the Applicants rewrite the claims in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and intervening claims. In particular, the Applicants amend independent claims 1 and 9 to include the limitations of allowable dependent claims 4 and 12, respectively. Other dependent claims that the Examiner objected to have been canceled (namely, claims 3-4, 6, 11-12, and 14 have been canceled). Thus, claims 1-2, 5, and 7-8 as well as claims 9-10, 13, and 15-16 are now in proper form for allowance.

The Applicants also add new claims 31-40 which are directed to and include precisely all of the limitations of other indicated allowable dependent claims. In particular, new independent claims 31 and 36 correspond to indicated allowable dependent claims 5 and 13, respectfully. New dependent claims 32-35 (which are dependent from new independent claim 31) correspond to previous dependent claims 2, 4, 7 and 8; and new dependent claims 37-40 (which are dependent from new independent claim 36) correspond to previous dependent claims 10, 12, 15, and 16. As apparent, no new issues are presented by the addition of these new claims 31-40 which are now in proper form for allowance.

Based on the above, the Applicants submit that all pending claims are allowable over the prior art of record and that the present application is now in a condition suitable for allowance. The Applicants respectfully request entry of the Amendment and allowance of the application.

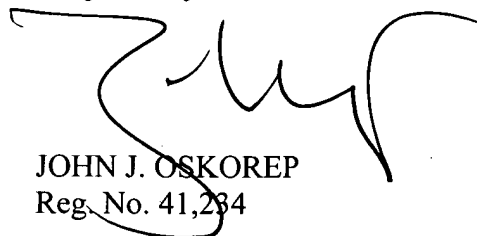
Thank you. Please feel free to contact the undersigned if it would expedite the prosecution of the present application.

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Respectfully submitted,



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